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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/604,404	07/17/2003	Avinash Malhotra	02-0707/KEL106	1403
32583	7590	12/16/2005	EXAMINER	
KELLOGG BROWN & ROOT, INC.			LANGEL, WAYNE A	
601 JEFFERSON AVENUE			ART UNIT	
HOUSTON, TX 77002			PAPER NUMBER	
			1754	

DATE MAILED: 12/16/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/604,404

Applicant(s)

MALHOTRA ET AL.

Examiner

Wayne Langel

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 October 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 19 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 17 July 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 11-18-03 and 11-25-03
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____

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Applicants' traverse of the restriction requirement has been considered, but is not deemed persuasive. Applicants' argument, that claim 19 is written in independent means-plus-function format paralleling the steps of method claim 10, and, as such, is also a linking claim which must be examined along with claim 10, is not convincing, since claim 1 is evidence that claim 10 does not depend upon the details of claim 19 for patentability. Accordingly the restriction requirement is made FINAL

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Grotz, Jr. in view of JP 6-159931. Grotz, Jr. discloses the process and apparatus recited in applicants' claims, and teaches at col. 7, lines 12-16 that bottoms liquid from the rectifier column 282 is throttled to a reduced pressure and flows over the outside of the condenser tubes 286 in the top of the condenser tubes 286 in the top of the rectifier condenser 282. (See col. 5, line 55 to col. 8, line 7.) The difference between the process and apparatus disclosed by Grotz, Jr., and that recited in applicants' claims, is that Grotz, Jr. does not disclose that the bottoms liquid should be expanded through a liquid expander with a work output, or means for expanding the liquid bottoms stream. JP 6-159931 discloses a method for cooling synthesis gas by adiabatically expanding liquid separated and stored in a bottom of a gas/liquid separator 3 by an expansion valve 4

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by a Joule – Thomson effect to become low temperature fluid, which is heat exchanged with raw material synthesis gas in heat exchanger 2. (See the English Abstract.) It would be obvious from JP 6-159931 to modify the process and apparatus of Grotz, Jr. by expanding bottoms liquid from rectifier column 282 through a liquid expander with a work output, since Grotz, Jr teaches at col.7, lines 12-16 that such bottoms liquid should be expanded, and JP 6-159931 discloses that the bottoms liquid from a process for cooling synthesis gas should be expanded in expansion turbine 5, which would have a work output.

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 15-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. It is indefinite as to whether claims 15-17 require all the limitations of parent claim 14, or only those recited in the “improvement” clause.

Bhakta is made of record for disclosing a moderate excess nitrogen Braun Purifier process.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Wayne Langel whose telephone number is 571-272-1353. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday, 8 am - 3:30 pm Eastern Time.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Stanley Silverman can be reached on 571-272-1358. The fax phone

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number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Wayne Langel
Primary Examiner
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